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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/564,183	01/11/2006	Jouji Nakayama	284317US=40PCT	8019
22850	7590	02/02/2009		
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			EXAMINER VO, TRUONG V	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2169	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			02/02/2009 ELECTRONIC	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/564,183

Applicant(s)

NAKAYAMA ET AL.

Examiner

TRUONG V. VO

Art Unit

2169

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 November 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9,11-17 and 19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9,11-17 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11 January 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to communications filed November 21, 2008.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on November 21, 2008 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Furthermore, Examiner has contacted Applicants' representative (Andrew T. Harry No. 56,959) on January 26, 2009. Examiner respectfully suggests Mr. Harry to fix the 101 and 112 issues.

Status of Claims

4. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19 are pending, of which claims 1, 9, 17 and 19 are in independent form. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 second paragraph. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
7. For example, claims 1, 9, 17 and 19 recites the limitation "storing means" in the claims. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

8. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

9. Claims 1 and 3-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is not statutory for the following reasons:

Claims 1 and 3-8 are directed towards a method for associating at least a process object and at least a process that should be executed for each process object with each node in a tree structure. According to MPEP § 2106.IV.B, the first step in determining whether a claim recites patent eligible subject matter is to

determine whether the claim falls within one of the four statutory categories of invention recited in 35 USC § 101: process, machine, manufacture and composition of matter. The latter three categories define “things” or “products,” while a “process” consists of a series of steps or acts to be performed. For purposes of § 101, a “process” has been given a specialized, limited meaning by the courts. Based on Supreme Court precedent and recent Federal Circuit decisions, a claimed process is patent-eligible under § 101 if: (1) it is tied to a particular machine or apparatus, or (2) it transforms a particular article into a different state or thing.” Since the claim fails to meet the requirements mentioned above to place the claim in the statutory category of a process, the claim fails to fall within one of the four statutory categories (i.e., process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter).

10. Claims 9, 11-16 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is not statutory for the following reasons:

The claims lack the necessary physical articles or objects to constitute a machine or manufacture within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. 101.

For example, claim 9 discloses “[a] system management apparatus for associating at least a process object and at least a process executed for each process object with each node in a tree structure...” does not inherently mean that the claim is directed to a machine. Only if at least one of the claimed elements of the system is a

physical part of a device can the system as claimed constitute part of a device or combination of devices to be a machine within the meaning of 101.

They are clearly not a series of steps or acts to be a process nor are they a combination of chemical compounds to be a composition of matter. As such, they fail to fall within a statutory category. They are, at best, functional descriptive material per se.

Descriptive material can be characterized as either "functional descriptive material" or "nonfunctional descriptive material." Both types of "descriptive material" are nonstatutory when claimed as descriptive material per se, 33 F.3d at 1360, 31 USPQ2d at 1759. When functional descriptive material is recorded on some computer-readable medium, it becomes structurally and functionally interrelated to the medium and will be statutory in most cases since use of technology permits the function of the descriptive material to be realized. Compare in re Lowry, 32 F.3d 1579, 1583-84, 32 USPQ2d 1031, 1035 (Fed. Cir. 1994)

Merely claiming nonfunctional descriptive material, i.e., abstract ideas, stored on a computer-readable medium, in a computer, or on an electromagnetic carrier signal, does not make it statutory. See Diehr, 450 U.S. at 185-86, 209 USPQ at 8 (noting that the claims for an algorithm in Benson were unpatentable as abstract ideas because "[t]he sole practical application of the algorithm was in connection with the programming of a general purpose computer.").

11. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is not statutory for the following reasons:

Computer-readable recording medium (defined in the original disclosure as including transmission, etc.):

The claims fail to place the invention squarely within one statutory class of invention. On page 30 lines 26-27 of the instant specification, applicant has provided evidence that applicant intends the "medium" to include signals. As such, the claim is drawn to a form of energy. Energy is not one of the four categories of invention and therefor this claim(s) is/are non statutory. Energy is not a series of steps or acts and thus is not a process. Energy is not a physical article or object and as such is not a machine or manufacture. Energy is not a combination of substances and therefor not a composition of matter.

Allowable Subject Matter

12. Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph and 35 U.S.C. 101, set forth in this Office action.

Conclusion

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Truong V. Vo whose telephone number is (571) 272-1796. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thr. 7:30a.m.-5p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Pierre Vital can be reached on (571) 272-4215. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

January 26, 2009

Truong Van Vo

/Truong V Vo/
Examiner, Art Unit 2169

/Pierre M. Vital/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2169